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For a thoroughly sound and sane critical treatment which is at once scholarly, sympathetic, and religious, this little book can be heartily recommended.

The translator has done his work well. The translation is clear, readable, and, for the most part, faithful to the original. At two or three points slight expansions have been introduced. Thus, among the modern illustrations of etymological legends, one is surprised on p. 28 to find a Berlin professor citing as his first examples American folk-etymologies of the name of the Connecticut river and Manhattan island, but, upon turning to the original, these examples do not appear in the German. Some of the expansions are not so successful and illuminating. For example, on p. 96 (*cf. Komm.*, p. xlivi) a few lines are introduced with reference to legends which were intended to explain the sanctity of places of worship; it is stated that "the legends . . . were transferred to the patriarch Jared." Is this a typographical error for Jacob? We know of no patriarch Jared except among the ante-deluvians, and there are no legends concerning him.

On the whole, however, the work is admirably done, and we have nothing but commendation for this little book.

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DIE BÜCHER DER KÖNIGE. Erklärt von I. BENZINGER. (= "Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament," herausg. von Karl Marti, Lieferung 7.) Tübingen: Mohr, 1899. Pp. xxiii + 211. M. 5.

THE "Einleitung" lays the foundation for the author's plan and method of criticism and exposition. The books are broken into the usual three divisions: (1) 1 Kings, chaps. 1-11; (2) 1 Kings, chap. 12—2 Kings, chap. 17; (3) 2 Kings, chaps. 18-25. The central point of the first division is the building of the temple (chaps. 6 and 7), around which all the other material is arranged, to show forth Solomon's wisdom, might, and kingdom. The second division's most notable portions are those pertaining to the histories of Elijah and Elisha. Besides these, the reader finds detailed accounts only of Kings Jeroboam (I.), Ahab, Joram of Israel, Jehu, and Joash of Judah. Of the others there are only brief sketches. In the third division, Josiah's reform, and the events under Hezekiah's reign in which Isaiah took part, are the main sections.

The sources of Kings were (1) a lot of short notices of events of a historical character, and (2) a collection of detailed accounts, some embodied in popular form and others in an elevated style, differing, however, in their value as history. These materials were taken by the compiler or editor, and woven into a unified record. Some of the accounts had already been worked over, so that he probably had some events described in two different recensions. Out of all these fragments he constructed the books of Kings, the first edition of which appeared before the exile. A second edition of the work was prepared by an editor subsequent to the exile. Some of the passages embodied in his edition are 1 Kings, chap. 8; 9:1-9; 2 Kings, chaps. 17; 21 (in part); 22:15-20. These two editors are designated by R¹ and R². The real editor who gathered together the material from different sources was R¹, the pre-exilic compiler. The synchronistic material, and such prophetic material as 1 Kings 12:33—13:34 and 2 Kings 19:21 ff., are to be attributed to R². But his other contributions are not always easy to detect in the ongoing of the text.

Benzinger finds the best help for text correction in the Greek translation, examples of which he cites in abundance. His method of constructing the chronology, by getting the total of the years of the reigns of the kings in each kingdom, will not aid in the solution of the problems. The chronology of Israel and Judah that will be fixed henceforth will take into account several overlappings, or synchronistic reigns or parts of reigns. The sum total of the years in either kingdom is a misleading element and should not enter the question.

The method of the commentary is that of the Marti series in general. There is regrettably no translation of the whole text, such as is found at the top of the page in the Nowack series. The literary critical treatments are printed in small type, and the textual and exegetical discussions in large type. It is a decided weakness of the series that it presents no continuous translation. The force of the results of textual discussions can often be shown *only* by a translation which exhibits both the new sense of the passage in itself and in its relation to the context. To omit that is to lose part of the real value of the work.

The textual critical part of the work shows eminent good sense. The author wisely omits an encyclopædic collection of opinions, but rather cites one or two late authorities or simply gives his own. He slavishly follows no one, but makes large use of Klostermann. Occasionally he makes an assertion (*e.g.*, p. 78, second sentence; p. 79, first

statement under vs. 18; p. 195, under vs. 33) that is merely an assertion, with no proof given or cited. But he lays under contribution to his work the best textual and historical literature of this day. With the exception of the omission of the translation, this is the most compact, brief commentary on the books of Kings.

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ESRA, NEHEMIA UND ESTHER. Übersetzt und erklärt. Von C. SIEGFRIED. (= "Handkommentar zum Alten Testament," I. Abtheilung: Die Bücher.) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901. Pp. 175. M. 3.80.

PROFESSOR NOWACK was disabled by a severe illness when this volume went through the press, but the editorial work seems to have been well done by Baentsch. Unusual interest attaches to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah at present, because critical discussion has for some time been directed toward them, and some startling conclusions have been put forth. The questions which have been most to the front are two: What part of the so-called memoirs of Ezra and of Nehemiah are authentic? and, What is the value of these books as historical sources? There has been a tendency to reduce very largely the compass of the memoirs, and to question the historical value of the rest of the books. We therefore naturally turn to the brief introduction to see what conclusion Siegfried has reached in regard to these points.

Like everyone else, our author holds that the present book of Ezra-Nehemiah is the work of the chronicler. But he assigns to his pen very little except the working over of some of his sources. Siegfried holds that Ezra 7:27—8:34; 9:1—5 are "*verbatim* extracts from Ezra's memoirs," while 7:1—10; 10:1—44; Neh., chaps. 8—10, are extracts which have been worked over. *Verbatim* extracts from Nehemiah's memoirs are found in Neh. 1:1—4:17; 5:1—7:5; 11:1 f.; 12:31, 32, 37—40; 13:4—31, while Neh. 11:3—24 is an extract which has been edited. The Aramaic portions are said to be "partly authentic translations of the royal Persian decrees, partly portions taken from Aramaic documents and colored by the chronicler." The different sources are marked in the translated text by different kinds of type, but without proper explanation. A much better plan is to indicate sources by symbols on the margin. The necessarily great variety of type makes unpleasant reading. It will be seen that this treatment is conservative, the writer being little influenced by the recent opinions.